Phragmites australis Western North America Temperate Semi-natural Herbaceous Vegetation

COMMON NAME	Common Reed Western North America Temperate Semi-natural Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	Western Reed Marsh
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Herbaceous Vegetation (V)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Perennial graminoid vegetation (V.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (V.A.5.N)
FORMATION	Semipermanently flooded temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.l.)
ALLIANCE	PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS SEMIPERMANENTLY FLOODED HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE
CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL	3
USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM	Terrestrial

RANGE

Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge

This is a rare association at LNWR that only occurs in a few small stands.

Globally

This reed marsh type is found across the west-temperate regions of the United States and Canada, ranging from western North Dakota and Saskatchewan to Oregon, south to California and Texas. Its distribution is somewhat incomplete as not all states have listed semi-natural types in their state.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge

The association is characterized by having dense cover of common reed and little overall species diversity.

Globally

This association is widespread in the western U.S. and Canada. Elevation ranges from 640-1980 m. Stands occur in temporarily to semipermanently flooded marshes, ditches, impoundments, pond and lake margins, swales, and wet meadows that often have been disturbed by human activity. Sites are usually flooded during the growing season, but the soil surface may dry out in late summer. Soils are often fine-textured silts and clays. In Colorado and Utah, this reed marsh often occurs in small wet patches in seeps and backwater areas of large floodplains, around the fringes of irrigation ponds, ditches, and along railroad embankments that have poor drainage.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge

Stratum	Species
HERBACEOUS	*Phragmites australis, Typha latifolia*

Globally

Stratum	Species
GRAMINOID	*Phragmites australis*

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES
Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge
Phragmites australis, Typha latifolia

Globally
Phragmites australis

OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES (n/a)

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION
Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge
Small stands of this type typically have very little associated species.

Globally
The vegetation is often variable, as *Phragmites australis* will often invade into existing natural or semi-natural communities present on the site. Once firmly established, this community is usually strongly dominated by *Phragmites australis*, with few or no other vascular plants present. Stands have a dense, 1- to 3-m tall herbaceous layer dominated by the perennial graminoid *Phragmites australis* usually with over 80% cover. Associates include *Agrostis stolonifera, Carex* spp., *Conyza canadensis, Glycyrrhiza lepidota, Iva axillaris, Mentha arvensis, Schoenoplectus acutus (= Scirpus acutus)*, and *Typha latifolia*. Introduced species such as *Lepidium latifolium* and *Cirsium arvense* may be present and compete well against *Phragmites australis* in disturbed sites.

CONSERVATION RANK G2Q.

DATABASE CODE CEGL001484

SIMILAR ASSOCIATIONS
Phragmites australis Eastern North America Temperate Semi-natural Herbaceous Vegetation (CEGL004141)

COMMENTS
Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge
(n/a)

Globally
This vegetation has variable hydrology and is often treated as part of other marshes and meadows. The geographic distribution of the type is arbitrarily limited to Bailey's Dry and Humid Temperate Domain in western North America (Bailey 1997, 1998). Compare with *Phragmites australis* Eastern North America Temperate Semi-natural Herbaceous Vegetation

(CEGL004141). The two types need to be better distinguished, both conceptually and nomenclaturally.

REFERENCES

Bailey, R. G., P. E. Avers, T. King, and W. H. McNab, editors. 1994. Ecoregions and subregions of the United States (map). Washington, DC: U.S. Geological Survey. Scale 1:7,500,000 colored. Accompanied by a supplementary table of map unit descriptions compiled and edited by W. H. McNab and R. G. Bailey. Prepared for the USDA Forest Service.

Hansen, P. L., R. D. Pfister, K. Boggs, B. J. Cook, J. Joy, and D. K. Hinckley. 1995. Classification and management of Montana's riparian and wetland sites. Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station, School of Forestry, University of Montana, Miscellaneous Publication No. 54. 646 pp.

Hansen, P., K. Boggs, and R. Pfister. 1991. Classification and management of riparian and wetland sites in Montana. Unpublished draft version prepared for Montana Riparian Association, Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station, School of Forestry, University of Montana, Missoula. 478 pp.

Kittel, G., E. Van Wie, M. Damm, R. Rondeau, S. Kettler, and J. Sanderson. 1999. A classification of the riparian plant associations of the Rio Grande and Closed Basin watersheds, Colorado. Unpublished report prepared by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Colorado State University, Fort Collins.

Kittel, G., R. Rondeau, N. Lederer, and D. Randolph. 1994. A classification of the riparian vegetation of the White and Colorado River basins, Colorado. Final report submitted to Colorado Department of Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Boulder. 166 pp.